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FOUR SONNETS
AND A SONGLET
BY
WALTER CARRUTH
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA
JANUARY 1, 1910



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HENRY MORSE STEPHEN

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SIGNAL RIDGE *and* RANCHERIA CREEK



T the first peep of dawn my wheel be-
striding,

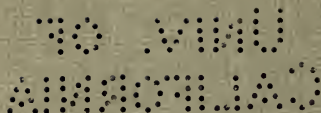
The winding road along the ridge I take ;

Below the valley lies, a fog-filled lake ;—

The long grade calls for cool and careful
riding ;—

While sluggish folk in bed are still abiding
I round the sinuous curves with ready brake,
Stopping at ferny spring my thirst to slake,
While startled jays give me a noisy chiding ;

Furry wood folk run scurrying from the road,
The ceanothus fragrance fills the air,
The redwood boughs exhale their incense load,
Azalias thrill me with their odor rare ;
And now a note for which I've listed long,
Sweet beyond words, the thrush's matin song.



THE RHODODENDRONS

NOYO RIDGE



IGH the day's close when spent with heavy
wheeling

I struck a ridge road white with shift-
ing sand,

Through which I pushed my wheel with
weary hand;

Naught in the prospect to one sense appealing
Till the scrub cypress opened out, revealing
Where rosy rhododendrons splendid stand,
Gay valiant knights, the lords of that waste land;
Hidden they reign 'midst cypress ranks concealing.

Cheered by the sight fatigue and hunger vanished,
My ardor rose as each shrub came in view,
All else but Beauty from my breast was banished,
And dear Dame Nature gained her homage due,—
A homage and allegiance death may sever,
But till all end it shall be ended never.

A ROMEO OF THE BOUGH



ELATED in the Paso Robles hills
In April, fated month of Nineteen-six,*
At dusk I lost my road, an awkward fix ;
I had no wish to tempt the evening chills ;
(Visions of malaria and doctor's bills) ;
When from a moss-clad oak o'erhead
there floats

Not bird song, but such love-impassioned notes
As make me quite forget the threatened ills.

Nature brings solace to her devotee,—
Owl love-notes, needed things like food and fire,—
Such was the sweet relief she brought to me,
And satisfied my uttermost desire.
And now I trow, there is no feathered fowl
Can play the Romeo like the pygmy owl.

*Returning from this wheeling trip by rail, a belated train brought me into San Francisco after the last Oakland boat had departed, and that uncanny visitor, the temblor (sounds better than *earthquake*) of Nineteen-six, found me leaning against the arcade at the Ferry building waiting for the first boat across the Bay, which I took, leaving San Francisco sadly shaken and ablaze.

TRESPASSING ON "THE HEIGHTS"

Respectfully Inscribed to the Bard of the Sierras



IKING of late across the poet's grounds
Laden with toyon gay and roots of fern,
Ravished from off the *far* side of the burn
Whose foaming cascades mark his eastern
bounds,

I spied the ancient bard upon his rounds ;
His eagle eye for trespassers was "peeled,"
But only with high top-boots was he "heeled ;"—
That he spied me was patent from the sounds.

An interview the poet sought full sore,
But I, remembering his lyric fire
And mindful of those number tens he wore,
Resisted his entreaties to draw nigher,
Preferring much some day to call again
When nothing from the canyon-side I'd ta'en.

HOLLY AND MISTLETOE

A SONGLET



DOES the jolly
Berried Holly
Tempt to folly?
No, ah no!
'T is the sly,
Feigning shy
Mistletoe,
Hanging high,
That does so.

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